

Message Text

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45/64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 INT-08 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

DRC-01 /084 W

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R 051510Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL BREMEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1349

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

UNCLAS BREMEN 0098

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 2, LINE 13: 11 VICE 18 PERCENT)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: STRIKE OF THE BREMEN METAL WORKERS UNION

1. SUMMARY - AFTER THE DECISION TAKEN BY EUGEN LODERER (CHAIRMAN) AND THE BOARD OF THE GERMAN METAL WORKERS UNION IN HAMBURG ON MARCH 4, 1974, ALMOST 57,000 BREMEN AND BREMERHAVEN METAL WORKERS IN 57 BREMEN PLANTS WILL STRIKE STARTING MARCH 6, AT 6 A.M. IT WILL BE THE FIRST STRIKE IN THE BREMEN METAL WORKING INDUSTRY SINCE 1953.

2. LAST WEEK, IN A 2-DAY UNION VOTE, 93.8 PERCENT OF THE UNION MEMBERS ENTITLED TO VOTE DECLARED THEMSELVES IN FAVOR OF STRIKING. ORIGINALLY THE BREMEN METAL WORKERS UNION HAD ASKED FOR AN 18 PERCENT WAGE AND SALARY INCREASE, I.E. THE HIGHEST INCREASE IN THIS YEAR'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ROUND IN THE FRG. THE PROPOSITION OF THE MEDIATOR TO INCREASE SALARIES AND WAGES

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14 PERCENT, RETROACTIVELY TO JANUARY 1, 1974 HAD BEEN ACCEPTED

BY THE UNION. HOWEVER, IT WAS REJECTED BY THE EMPLOYERS WHO ARE OFFERING AN 11 PERCENT WAGE INCREASE RETROACTIVE TO JANUARY 1, AND A SUPPLEMENTAL 2 PERCENT INCREASE STARTING IN NOVEMBER 1974, PLUS AN INCREASE IN VACATION PAY FROM 30 PERCENT TO 50 PERCENT OF A MONTH'S SALARY. THE HOURLY WAGE OF BREMEN METAL WORKERS WOULD, IF THE 11 PERCENT INCREASE WERE GRANTED, INCREASE FROM DM 5.88 TO DM 6.53 AND IN NOVEMBER TO DM 6.64.

3. IT IS LIKELY THAT ECONOMICS SENATOR JANTZEN WILL OFFER HIMSELF AS A MEDIATOR ON WEDNESDAY AFTER THE STRIKE HAS BEGUN. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE LARGEST BREMEN NEWSPAPER, THE WESER KURIER, HE SAID THAT THE QUOTE INITIAL MEDIATION COULD TAKE PLACE AT THE END OF THIS WEEK UNQUOTE. HE DOES NOT PLAN TO INTERVENE NOW BECAUSE OF THE LARGE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES.

4. THE EMPLOYERS HAVE SAID THAT THEY WILL NOT GIVE IN TO THE STRIKERS' DEMANDS, AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVE, WOLFGANG SCHAARSCHMIDT, ON MARCH 4 RENEWED HIS OFFER TO NEGOTIATE ON THE BASIS OF AN 11 PERCENT WAGE INCREASE. THIS OFFER WAS AGAIN IMMEDIATELY REJECTED BY THE UNION. ALTHOUGH INFORMAL CONTACTS BETWEEN POLITICIANS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DISPUTING PARTIES HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE, JANTZEN WILL INTERVENE ONLY IF THERE IS SOME HOPE OF COMPROMISE WHICH FOR THE MOMENT THERE IS NOT. USENIK

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